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Human Rights Commission

Contract Compliance
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Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender & HIV Discrimination

MAY 17 2001

1999 GUIDELINES FOR HRC STANDING COMMITTEES

Marivic S. Bamba
Executive Director

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Human Rights Commission operates through five standing committees. The standing committees are: 1. Employment; 2. Issues; 3. Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Advisory; 4. Minority Business Enterprise/Women Business Enterprise/Local Business Enterprise Community Advisory; and 5. Youth and Education. Commissioners are named by the Chairperson of the Commission to these standing committees, members of the Community also are appointed by the Chair.

The Employment Committee has members representing business, government, labor and community interests. This Committee meets usually on the first

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REFERENCE BOOK

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Thursday from 12:00 Noon to 2:00 P.M. at the Human Rights Commission offices. The work of the Employment Committee includes: 1) research on the employment patterns of City contractors; 2) development of affirmative action programs and policies; 3) recommendation of action; and 4) studying issues referred by the full Commission.

The Issues Committee focuses on issues related to immigration and law enforcement and public safety; fair housing, prejudice-discrimination, and miscellaneous issues. The Committee meets on call.

Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Advisory Committee (LGBTAC) was established in 1975 by amendment to Chapter 12A of the San Francisco

The Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Advisory Committee members are selected on the basis of interviews, and are broadly representative of the diversity of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community. The Committee meets usually on the third Tuesday of the month from 12:00 P.M. at the Human Rights Commission offices. The Committee focuses specifically to the identification and solution of problems affecting the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities of San Francisco, including HIV/AIDS discrimination. The Committee provides

assistance and advice to the Commission regarding discrimination in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities; advocates for the civil rights of persons with AIDS/HIV; educates the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities about issues of diversity in those communities; and addresses issues of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth.

The Minority Business Enterprise/Women Business Enterprise/Local Business Enterprise Community Advisory Committee, as mandated by Chapter 12D of the San Francisco Administrative Code, was formed in March 1985. The Committee

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25 Van Ness Avenue
Suite 800
San Francisco
California 94102-6033



TEL (415) 252-2500
FAX (415) 431-5764
TDD (415) 252-2550
<http://www.sfhumanrights.org>





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MAY 17 2001

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FOR HRC STANDING COMMITTEES

The Human Rights Commission operates through five standing committees. The standing committees are: 1. Employment; 2. Issues; 3. Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Advisory; 4. Minority Business Enterprise/Women Business Enterprise/Local Business Enterprise Community Advisory; and 5. Youth and Education. Commissioners are assigned by the Chairperson of the Commission to these standing committees, members from the Community also are appointed by the Chair.

- * The Employment Committee has members representing business, government, labor, and community interests. This Committee meets usually on the first Thursday of the month from 12:00 Noon to 2:00 P.M. at the Human Rights Commission offices. The work of the Employment Committee includes: 1) reviewing staff reports on the employment patterns of City contractors; 2) development of affirmative action programs and policies; 3) recommendation of positions on legislation; and 4) studying issues referred by the full Commission.
- * The Issues Committee focuses on issues related to immigration and undocumented aliens; law enforcement and public safety; fair housing, prejudice-based violence, and miscellaneous issues. The Committee meets on call.
- * The Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Advisory Committee (LGBTAC) was established in May of 1975 by amendment to Chapter 12A of the San Francisco Administrative Code. The Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Advisory Committee's members are selected on the basis of interviews, and are broadly representative of the diversity of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities. This Committee meets usually on the third Tuesday of the month from 5:30 P.M. to 7:30 P.M. at the Human Rights Commission offices. The LGBTAC addresses itself specifically to the identification and solution of problems associated with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities of San Francisco, and with HIV/AIDS discrimination. The Committee provides assistance and advice to the Commission regarding discrimination in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities; advocates for the civil rights of persons with AIDS/HIV; educates the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities about issues of diversity in those communities; and addresses issues of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth.
- * The Minority Business Enterprise/Women Business Enterprise/Local Business Enterprise Community Advisory Committee, as mandated by Chapter 12D of the San Francisco Administrative Code, was formed in March 1985. The Committee



monitors and assists in the development and implementation of the Minority Business Enterprise/Women Business Enterprise/Local Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE/LBE) Ordinance and Program. This Committee meets usually on the third Wednesday of the month from 5:30 P.M. to 7:30 P.M. at the HRC offices.

- * The Youth and Education Committee meets on the third Thursday of the month from 3:30 P.M. to 5:30 P.M. at the Human Rights Commission offices, eight or nine times a year. The Youth and Education Committee focuses on education and youth issues, including the juvenile justice system, which impact on young people in the HRC's protected classes.
- * Task Forces are established by the Commission, from time to time, and operate similarly to Standing Committees.

FUNCTION AND OPERATION OF STANDING COMMITTEES

1. The standing committees are an integral and vitally important component of the Human Rights Commission, providing for community involvement and for the opportunity for in-depth study and exploration of issues.
2. Issues on which the Commission is to act must be acted on first by a committee. The only exception to this is an emergency resolution which requires either a 2/3 vote or a unanimous vote of all Commissioners present, depending on whether or not the proposed action is consistent with previous Commission action.
3. Standing committees generally hold one meeting a month, usually averaging ten meetings per year. All meetings of the standing committees are open to the public and subject to public meeting and accessibility laws.
4. The Committee is to make a conscious effort to present all sides of an issue fairly prior to taking a stand, inviting speakers to present the opposing points of view whenever possible.
5. The City's position on State legislation can be established through a resolution adopted by the Board of Supervisors or by action taken by the Mayor's State Legislation Committee. Each City department is to assign a staff person to the State Legislation Committee to act as liaison to the Committee. Requests for the HRC to consider specific State legislation may be transmitted to the Chair of the Commission, the standing committee Chair, or the HRC Executive Director for referral to committee, or may originate with the City's Legislative Advocate, HRC commissioners and staff, or other City departments. HRC's positions on specific State legislation are determined through the committee process.

After duly calendaring and hearing all sides to the legislation under consideration, the Committee may make a recommendation to the full Commission, who then may calendar and consider the legislation, may take a position on the legislation, and/or may suggest amendments to the legislation. Staff is to then communicate and represent this position to the City's State Legislation Committee. Once the City's State Legislation Committee takes a position on the legislation, HRC Committee staff is to communicate this position to the legislation's author(s), San Francisco's representatives in the State Legislature, the Mayor, the Board of Supervisors, and the City's Legislative Advocate, as well as to copy all Commissioners and Committee members with any relevant correspondence. Further support of the City's position on the legislation may be provided by the Committee staff.

6. HRC may also take positions on Federal legislation. The process is similar to that used to take positions on State legislation, except that once HRC has established a position on a specific piece of Federal legislation, the Committee staffer is to notify the City's Federal Legislative Advocate, and (over the signature of the HRC Chair) the Mayor and Board of Supervisors. San Francisco's representatives in the U.S. Congress are not to be contacted directly to inform them of HRC's position on specific legislation until that position is cleared through the City's Federal Legislative Advocate or the Mayor's Office.
7. When the City and County of San Francisco has taken an official position on pending legislation, the HRC can work in support of that position. The HRC cannot take a position which is inconsistent with the official position. In the absence of an official position, the HRC can provide information and analysis of its impact on the mandate of the Commission.
8. Positions on State or Federal rules, regulations, or other administrative, non-legislative actions may be taken in the same manner and with the same procedures and provisions as for legislative matters.
9. The Human Rights Commission cannot take a position on state or local ballot propositions; however, standing committees can examine the proposition, presenting all sides. After receiving the report of the standing committee, the Commission may then adopt an analysis of the ballot proposition related to its impact on the mandate of the Commission and transmit this analysis to the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor.
10. As a City agency, the HRC cannot take positions on partisan election issues and cannot endorse candidates.
11. The standing committees operate under Robert's Rules of Order; however, a quorum need not be established for the committee to hear presentations, to provide input to staff, and to make recommendations to the Commissioners. Each Committee member is to vote on all motions for which they are in attendance unless they have declared a conflict of interest prior to the vote being taken.

COMMISSIONER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Commissioners provide leadership for, and set policy in, the operation of the standing committees. Chairs are to consult with committee staff frequently, and to work cooperatively with them.
2. Regular and active participation by the standing committee Chair and Vice Chair in Committee meetings is essential for the effective operation of the standing committee. Additionally, the Chairs and Vice-Chairs should become knowledgeable of the mandate and workings of the Commission and that standing committee.
3. The Chair of the Commission shall appoint the Chair and Vice Chair of each standing committee for a one year term prior to March 1, or as vacancies occur.
4. Commissioners are encouraged to identify and participate in issues and events pertinent to committees and, when appropriate, represent the Commission and/or the standing committees before other bodies.
5. All recommended actions, proposed resolutions, or reports coming from the standing committees to the regular meetings of the Commission do so through their Chairpersons or their designee. The Chairperson will introduce the agenda item, the guest speaker or speakers, if there are such, present a brief summary of standing committee action, and state what action the Commission is being asked to take. If Commission action is required or requested (such as adoption of a proposed resolution, or letter), the Chairperson moves that such action be taken. This motion will open the discussion by the full Commission. Items which have been previously acted upon by the standing committee do not require a second. According to Robert's Rules of Order, "the requirement (for a second) does not apply when the motion is made by direction of a board or committee." Draft copies of resolutions and letters are to be provided to the Commissioners in advance, along with any relevant supporting materials.
6. The Chair of the standing committee is to approve the items for the meeting agenda for that committee.
7. The Committee Chair may cancel or reschedule the committee meeting for that month if the regular meeting day falls on or is adjacent to a legal, religious, or appropriate cultural holiday. In addition, meetings may be canceled, at the discretion of the committee Chair and Staff, for the following reasons: unavailability of Commissioners or staff, the lack of immediate issues, or other mitigating circumstances, such as cancellation by a key speaker or lack of a quorum.
8. Commissioners are encouraged to work toward consensus with committee members on all issues, and to ensure that committee meetings are inclusive and respectful of the diversity of members and the public.

COMMITTEE MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Membership on the standing committee is for a one-year term beginning March 1.
2. Committee members serving on HRC standing committees must represent the highest standards of sensitivity to and genuine respect for cultural diversity, as the HRC must be a laboratory for multi-cultural understanding and tolerance.
3. Freedom of speech must be protected. The free exchange of ideas and differing points of view are strongly encouraged as long as these are not inconsistent with respect and tolerance for cultural diversity. Failure to abide by this code of tolerance and respect for others may result in a member being replaced on the Committee.
4. It is the responsibility of Committee members to attend regularly and to participate actively in standing committee meetings. The HRC attendance policy for standing committees is as follows: If a member accumulates three (3) absences during a one year period, that person will no longer be considered to be a member of that committee; however, in all instances, a person can appeal their removal to the full committee. The Committee's criteria for acting upon an appeal of removal as a committee are as follows: (1) granted upon request and following an expressed commitment to the Committee; and (2) reinstatement upon request following four absences during a one year term based on an explanation by the person as to the reasons for the previous absences and the likelihood, in the future, for regular attendance.
5. Bringing issues to the Committee is the responsibility of Committee members, with the assistance of staff. Committee members should advise HRC staff at least ten days before a Committee meeting that they have an agenda item.
6. Committee members shall assist in the drafting of letters, resolutions and other documents the committee votes to send to the commissioners for approval, and shall assist in the organization of panels and presentations.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Consistent with its function of supporting Commission members, the role of the HRC staff is to facilitate the work of the Commissioners in their committee activities and to ensure the effective and efficient operation of the Committees. To this end, Committee staff are responsible for logistics, meeting preparation and follow up, and for the orientation of members.
2. Standing committee staff are the key figures in the operation of the standing committee. The assignment as a committee staffer is considered a core staff function and is not an "extra duty".

3. The Committee staff is to consult with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee frequently, giving guidance when sought, and ensuring that Commissioners are able to carry out their policy making role.
4. The Committee staff is to develop the standing committee agenda and the standing committee items for the Commission agenda for approval by the Committee Chair. Staff is to consult with the Committee Chair re: the agenda and the issues involved prior to standing committee meetings.
5. The Committee staff for each of the standing committees is responsible for scheduling meetings; reserving a meeting place in advance; sending out meeting notices; preparing and posting, as required by the Sunshine Ordinance, a detailed agenda at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting; preparing minutes of the standing committee meeting; handling all correspondence, both incoming and outgoing; doing follow-up as directed by the Committee and/or its Commissioner Chair; scheduling Committee presentations on issues and drafting position papers and proposed resolutions; acquiring background and source material for distribution to the standing committee and for Commissioners when an issue has been scheduled for a Commission meeting; and attending the Commission meeting when their standing committee has an item, including committee report, calendared.
6. At least four business days prior to the Commission's regular or special meeting, all pertinent background material, including copies of any proposed resolution, letter, or position papers, is to be mailed to each Commissioner at the direction of the Director or the Commission Secretary.
7. At least a week in advance of the Committee meeting, all pertinent background material and the agenda are to be mailed to Committee members.
8. The Committee staff, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of that Committee, is to plan and present an annual orientation for the new Chair and Vice Chair and standing committee members and is to provide an informal orientation for any Commissioners or members joining the standing committee during the year.
9. The Committee staff is to recommend to the Committee Chair those members who should serve another term and those who should not, based on their attendance and participation. Further, staff is to identify groups or agencies from which to solicit new members and/or key individuals to be invited in order to broaden the representation on the standing committee. Letters requesting nominees from a group or thanking a member for services rendered are to be prepared by staff in the name of the Committee Chair with his/her approval. Staff is to confer with the Committee Chair regarding member participation in order to recommend to the Commission Chair those to be replaced during their term. Letters appointing people to a committee or conferring reappointment are to be prepared by staff in the name of the Commission Chair with his/her approval.

10. Standing committee staff are to schedule speakers for the regular Commission meetings, advising them that there is a time limit on their talk, and that they should be prepared to answer questions from Commissioners. Committee staff are to list speakers indicating name, title, and organization on the Commission agenda.
11. Media contacts, news releases, news advisories, public service announcements, and general media communications are to be prepared by the standing committee staff. Standing committee staff are to inform the Executive Director of overall and specific needs to communicate with the media related to their Committees. Media communications are a means of informing the community about standing committee or Commission actions and are to be used at the discretion of the Director. Committee staff are to inform the Executive Director of media contacts.
12. Staff is to maintain a pending file for standing committee work. Because issues may develop over time, staff should maintain files of background material, clippings, and resource people.
13. Staff is to maintain archival materials regarding the Committee's work.

